

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 BIB-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1232

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL MUNICH

USNATO 2371

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 8274

USIA FOR IBS, IEE, IPS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR

SUBJECT: MORE ON THE BREZHNEV SPEECH

REF: MOSCOW 8264

1. AFTER STUDY OF FULL PRINTED TEXT OF BREZHNEV'S JUNE 13
ELECTION SPEECH, WE FIND WE HAVE LITTLE TO ADD TO OUR "FIRST
IMPRESSIONS" REPORTED REFTEL.

2. THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP APPARENTLY FELT THAT, WITH CSCE AND
THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION HANGING FIRE, THIS WAS NO TIME FOR
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A MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENT, AND BREZHNEV'S SPEECH IS NOT

ONE. THE SPEECH DOES INDICATE THE OVERWHELMING IMPORTANCE THE SOVIETS CONTINUE TO ASCRIBE TO U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS. NO OTHER COUNTRY RECEIVED MORE THAN A PASSING REFERENCE, AND BREZHNEV'S MENTION OF THE COMING SUMMIT AND HIS QUOTING OF PRESIDENT FORD BY NAME ARE MOST UNUSUAL.

3. WHILE ALL OF BREZHNEV'S EXPLICIT REFERENCES TO THE U.S. WERE FAVORABLE AND MODERATE, THE DOUBTS EXPRESSED ABOUT THE WESTERN COMMITMENT TO DETENTE SEEM LARGELY FOCUSED ON WASHINGTON. HIS COMMENTS ON "SOME POLITICIANS" ADVOCATING INCREASED DEFENSE SPENDING AND HIS CALL FOR "GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL FIGURES" TO OPPOSE THEIR EFFORTS APPEARS TO REFLECT GROWING CONCERN INTER ALIA, ABOUT THE U.S. DEFENSE BUDGET. AND HIS REFERENCE TO THE WESTERN DEBATE ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF DETENTE WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE A U.S. CONTENT ALSO.

4. IN TONE, THE SPEECH, EVEN MORE THAN THOSE BY PODGORNYY AND KOSYGIN IS MAINLY ABOUT EAST-WEST RELATIONS, REFLECTS AN UNUSUAL AMOUNT OF PESSIMISM ABOUT THE WEST'S RELIABILITY IN SUPPORT OF DETENTE.

5. A GREAT MANY WESTERN NEWSMEN WITH WHOM WE HAVE TALKED HAVE FOCUSED ON THE FACT THAT THIS WAS BREZHNEV'S SECOND SHORT SPEECH IN A ROW, THAT IT WAS SHORTER THAN EITHER PODGORNYY'S OR KOSYGIN'S, AND THAT IT WAS HALF THE LENGTH OF HIS ELECTION SPEECH A YEAR AGO. INDICATIONS ARE, THEREFORE, THAT THE SPEECH WILL STIMULATE, RATHER THAN QUELL, SPECULATION IN THE WEST ABOUT BREZHNEV'S HEALTH.

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